

Appl. No. 10/806,956
Amdt. Dated January 11, 2005
Reply to Office action of October 21, 2004

Remarks/Arguments

1. Introduction

Applicants note with appreciation the finding of allowable subject matter recited in claims 24-26, 35, and 36. To expedite prosecution of the present patent application, the Applicants have amended claims 16 and 27 to include the subject matter of claim 26 that was considered allowable. As a result, the Applicants respectfully contend that claims 16 and 27, as amended, define an invention suitable for patent protection.

2. Rejections under 35 USC § 112, second paragraph

In the Office action, claims 16-43 were rejected under 35 USC section 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite and failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter that Applicants regard as the invention. To that end, the Applicants have amended the claims to more clearly define the invention by ensuring that the claims comport with the provisions of 35 USC section 112. None of amendments to the claims, except as pointed out above in the Introduction, were necessitated to overcome any prior art, and no new subject matter has been introduced by these amendments.

3. Amendments to the Specification

To have a more definite and clearly defined invention, the Applicants have amended the written specification. No new subject matter has been introduced by these amendments.

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4. The Non-obviousness of the Dependent Claims

Considering that the dependent claims include all of the features of the independent claims from which they depend, these claims are patentable to the extent that the independent claims are patentable. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully contend that the dependent claims define an apparatus suitable for patent protection.

The Applicants respectfully requests examination in view of the remarks. A notice of allowance is earnestly solicited.

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION/MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO or deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail, in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents.

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Respectfully Submitted,



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